

Minutes of interrogation of Oshima

Excerpts

The City of Tokyo.

April 22, 1946

I, Col. S. I. Rosenblit, Assistant Prosecutor from the USSR in the International Military Tribunal for the Far East with the Participation of Major Pas'kovsky acting as interpreter interrogated the defendant who testified:

1. Surname, first name: Oshima Hiroshi
2. Post held before arrest: Japanese Ambassador in Berlin
3. Party membership: I was no member of political parties.
4. Domicile: Tokyo, Sugamo prison.

A certificate of the interpreter for being duly warned of the responsibility for false translation is attached to the minutes of interrogation.

The interrogation is conducted in Japanese.

Question: What was the basic aim of Germany and Japan when they concluded the anti-Comintern Pact?

Answer: The Basic aim of Germany and Japan when they concluded the anti-Comintern Pact was to arrest the growth of communism.

Question: Specifically against what countries was this Pact directed?

Answer: When this pact was concluded Russia was meant in the first place. Moreover the Pact provided for the prevention of the spread of communist influence in other countries as well.

Question: Usually such Pacts are concluded not against ideas, but against a definite country. Are we correct if we say that the anti-Comintern Pact was directed against the Soviet Union?

Answer: The anti-Comintern Pact as a whole was not directed specifically against Russia. It was directed against communism in general. However it followed from the Pact that in case of Russo-German war Japan should not aid Russia, and also that Germany should not aid Russia in case of a Russo-Japanese war."

Question: Describe the history of negotiations carried on in 1938-1939 concerning the conclusion of a military alliance between Japan, Germany and Italy.

Answer: Approximately in June 1938 I received from the Japanese General Staff the documents which set before me a task of probing in Germany the possibility of concluding a military alliance with Japan in virtue of which Germany would be under obligation to enter into the war with the Soviet Union in case the latter attacked Japan and vice versa that Japan would be under obligation to enter into the war with the Soviet Union if the latter attacked Germany. In that time I was a military attache. At the beginning of July 1938 I visited Ribbentrop for the purpose of probing in a private manner whether Germany had any such intentions. I told Ribbentrop that I had an idea of concluding a consultative Pact between Japan and Germany, i.e. a Pact in virtue of which in case of conflict with Russia, the party which became subject to attack should consult the other party concerning the forms of aid the latter party should render to the party which became subject to attack. Just at that time Ribbentrop was leaving as he had his summer vacation. He told me that if a military alliance was to be concluded it should be a complete but not a halfway alliance. The obligation to hold consultations is a halfway obligation and Hitler was against such halfway Pacts and therefore we could talk only about a complete defensive alliance in virtue of which the contracting parties should without reservations enter into the war with the adversary which attacked one of the contracting parties.

Secondly Ribbentrop told me that Germany would like to have a military alliance directed not only against Russia but also against the other countries which might attack Germany and Japan, namely America, France, England, etc. I told him that the extension of that Pact to other countries, besides Russia, would depend on the degree of readiness of our army and

navy for the war against those states. I told him that such an extension of the Pact would be very difficult for Japan. To this Ribbentrop replied that Germany would not ask us to do the impossible, and that all the particulars of the behavior of the contracting parties in case of such a conflict could be discussed after the conclusion of the Pact. . . . I received a telegram confirming that major-general Kasahara forwarded my message to the leading military officers. All of them concurred in the idea of concluding such a Pact and reported to the council of five ministers which consisted then of Prime-Minister Fumoye, Foreign Minister Ugaki, War Minister Itagaki, Minister of the Navy Yonai and Minister of Finance Ikeda. The Council of five ministers also approved of the idea of concluding such a Pact, and I received a telegram from the General Staff offering me to continue the negotiations concerning the conclusion of the Pact, but bearing in mind that, that the military alliance should be mainly directed against Russia and all other countries which Germany had in view should be mentioned in the Pact as minor objectives.

Through Ito we received an instruction from our government. The Basic idea of that instruction was as follows: "Russia should be the main objective mentioned in the treaty, all other countries should be minor objectives, and the entry of Japan into the war against other countries could take place only if those countries were infected with communism." The divergency of views between Japan and Germany led to further negotiations marking time, and practically the Pact was not concluded in 1939. This continued till the conclusion by Germany of a Pact of non-aggression with the Soviet Union on August 23, 1939 as a result of which further negotiations concerning the conclusion of a military alliance between Germany, Japan and Italy were discontinued."

Question: How did you inform your Government as to the course of the German-Soviet war?

Answer: Approximately at the end of July or at the beginning of August 1941 I learned about the slowing up of the pace of the advance of the German army. The advance was not proceeding according to plan. Moscow and Leningrad were not taken according to the German plan. I asked information from Ribbentrop on that

subject. Ribbentrop invited Keitel to explain the matter. Keitel told me that the slowing up of the advance of the German army was caused by the excessive length of communications and rear units lagging behind, and that that was the reason why the pace of the advance of the German army was approximately three weeks behind plan.

Question: Do you know Nahara, press-agent of the Japanese Embassy in Berlin?

Answer: Yes, I do. He worked as interpreter in our Embassy. His father was Japanese, his mother German, he received German education, was connected with the Embassy and was lately used for radio interception work. He worked with us unofficially.

The testimony was recorded from the words of the defendant,
OSHIMA, Hiroshi.

Interrogated: Col Rosenblitt,
Assistant Prosecutor from the USSR
International Military Tribunal
For the Far East.

Interpreter: Major Pashkovsky.

Secretary-
Stenographer: Krjizovskaya.

Interrogation began	:	08.30
Interrogation was interrupted:	:	13.00
Interrogation continued	:	17.30
Interrogation was over	:	16.40

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSLATION OF EXCERPTS OF THE ABOVE DOCUMENT:

I, A. V. Kunin, hereby certify that I am thoroughly conversant with the Russian and English languages: and the above is a correct and true translation of the indicated excerpts of the above Document.

Signature: A. Kunin